

KEEP PEST OUT

AFTER A DISASTER, SUCH AS A FLOODING, RATS, MICE AND OTHER PESTS MIGHT GET IN YOUR HOME OR BUILDING.

Rodents and other pests can cause a problem for your health. They can spread diseases and can bite people or pets. They also can trigger asthma attacks or allergic reactions in some people.



Here are some things you can do to protect your home and family:

- Cover or close all holes in your walls. Some rodents can squeeze through holes as small as a dime.
- Wash anything you use for eating and cooking after you are done with them.
- Store food and water in containers made of thick plastic, glass, or metal with a tight-fitting lid.
- Throw out trash as soon as you can. Put trash in a covered trashcan or dumpster.
- Clean up debris and trash as soon as possible outside your home.
- Don't eat or drink food or water that could have come in contact with rodents.
- Trap any existing rodents using springloaded snap traps. When you clean up, wear rubber or plastic gloves, seal the dead rodent in two plastic bags, and throw away.

Rodent-Proofing Your Home:

Rats can enter the home through a hole the size of a quarter. Mice can enter through a hole the size of a dime. Seal gaps and holes inside and outside the home that are greater than a ¼-inch diameter with any of the following materials:

- Cement or cement mortar
- 19-gauge or greater metal mesh, wire screening, or hardware cloth (1/4-inch or less spacing is preferred)
- Steel wool
- Heavy-duty caulk
- Elastomeric sealant
- Expanding foam

Damaged or abandoned homes and other buildings may be infested with rodents. If buildings have been abandoned for an extended period of time, it may be helpful to air them out for 2-3 days before reentering. If you see signs of rodents, the building will need to be thoroughly cleaned. Contact your local health department for guidance on cleaning in these situations.

Cleanup of Rodent-Contaminated Areas or Dead Rodents:

Thoroughly clean areas with signs of rodent activity to reduce the likelihood of exposure to germs and diseases. When cleaning, do not stir dust when sweeping or vacuuming up droppings, urine, or nesting materials.

- Do not vacuum or sweep rodent urine, droppings or contaminated surfaces unless they have been disinfected.
- Wear rubber or plastic gloves if you need to touch dead rodents, traps or rodent droppings.
- Spray rodent urine, droppings and dead rodents with a disinfectant or a 1:10 chlorine solution (1½ cups of household bleach mixed with 1 gallon of water) until thoroughly soaked. Let it soak for 5 minutes.
- Use a paper towel to pick up the urine and the droppings and discard it outdoors in a sealed garbage container. After the rodent droppings and urine have been removed, disinfect items that might have been contaminated.
- Check traps regularly.
- Take the rodent out of the trap by lifting the spring-loaded metal bar and letting the animal fall into a plastic bag, then seal the bag, OR place the entire trap and dead rodent into a plastic bag, then seal the bag.
- Place the rodent or entire trap and rodent into a second plastic bag and seal it. Promptly dispose of the sealed double bag in a properly sealed outdoor garbage can.
- Wash gloved hands with soap and water or spray a disinfectant or bleach solution on gloves before taking them off.
- After removing gloves, thoroughly wash hands with soap and water (or use a waterless alcohol-based hand gel when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled).
- If the trap will be reused, decontaminate it by immersing and washing it in a disinfectant or 1:10 chlorine solution (1½ cups of household bleach with 1 gallon of water) and rinsing well afterwards.
- Continue trapping for at least 1 week after the last rodent is caught.



Kentucky Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



If rodents continue to be a problem, consider contacting a professional pest control operator for help.

<https://www.cdc.gov/natural-disasters/response/what-to-do-protect-yourself-from-animals-after-a-disaster.html>